

A NEW SPECIES OF OPISTHOBRANCHIA FROM VICTORIA

(Mollusca, Gastropoda)

By ROBERT F. BURN

It is now twenty-three years since the present species of *Aglaja* under discussion was first observed and collected. In 1934, Mrs. M. E. Freame of Altona, Victoria, forwarded a single specimen collected at Altona, Port Phillip Bay, to the Australian Museum. Miss Joyce Allan, former Curator of Molluscs at the Australian Museum, kindly sent me a copy (in 1955) of the notes and a rough sketch of the specimen and its shell made at that time (in 1934).

In 1933, Miss Allan described *Aglaja taronga* from Sydney Harbour, and although this is now thought to be a colour variety of a tropical species, it is large and very colourful. It was recorded from Swan Bay, Queenscliff (inside Port Phillip Bay), by the present writer in *J. Malacol. Soc. Aust.*, 1: 13 (1957). In 1909, Verco described a very fine shell extracted from a specimen collected at Troubridge Island, South Australia, as *A. troubridgensis*. From the size of the shell, the unknown animal of this species would have been over five inches long. This species is apparently known only from the original collection.

The species described below as new differs greatly from both the species mentioned above mainly in size. Of all the specimens known to the writer none is over 20 mm. in overall length, and the shell is consistently under 3 mm. in major diameter.

The type specimen of this species and a shell taken from a paratype have been presented to the National Museum, Melbourne.

NOMENCLATRURAL POSITION OF THE GENUS*AGLAIA*

Class	GASTROPODA
Sub-class	OPISTHOBRANCHIA
Order	CEPHALASPIDEA
Sub-order	<i>Philinacea</i>
Family	<i>Aglaiidae</i>
Genus	<i>Aglaja</i>

AGLAIA Renier, 1804.

Animal smooth, soft, dorsally separated into two shields by a transverse groove. Foot wide, truncate, continued laterally into two fairly ample parapodia divided posteriorly. Rhinophores and head appendages absent but small lumps, laminae or bristles may be present on either side of the mouth. Shell minute, internal, fragile, of very few whorls of which the last is usually free. Gill large, bipinnate, on posterior right side of body. Radula, jaws, and stomach plates absent; buccal mass large. Type: *A. tricolorata* Renier.

PLATE VIII

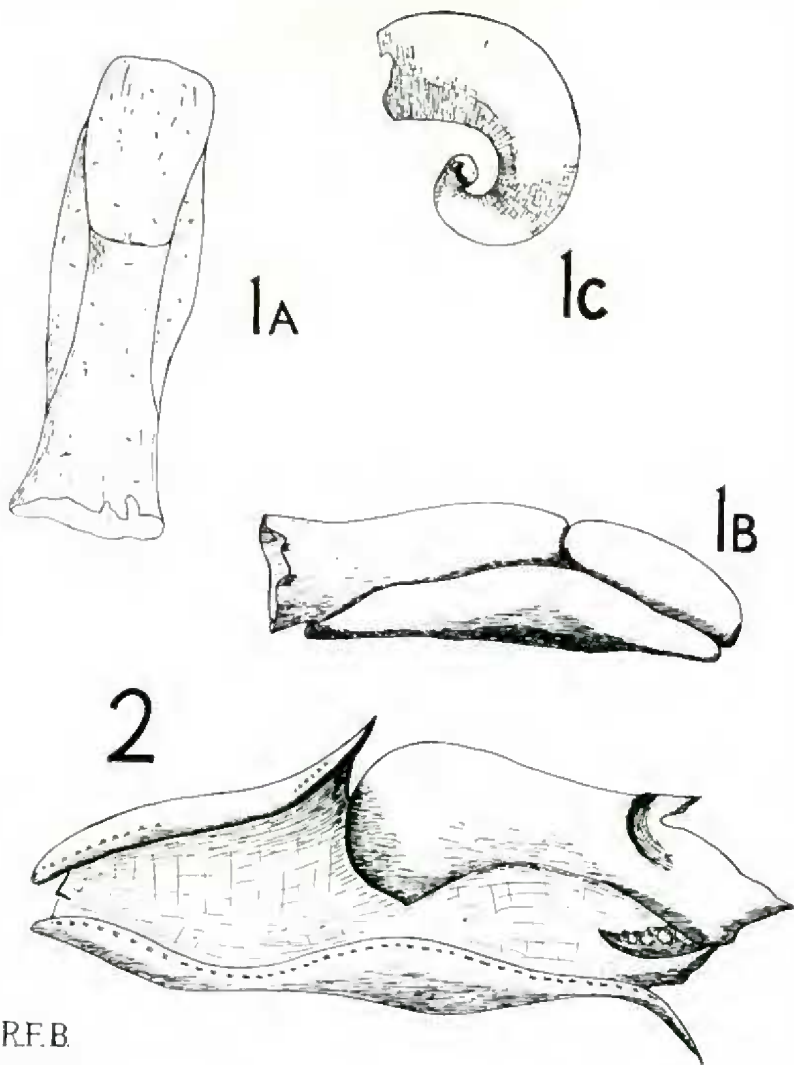


Fig. 1.—*Aglaia queritor* sp. nov.: a, dorsal aspect; b, right-lateral aspect; c, shell.

Fig. 2.—*Aglaia taronga* Allan, left-lateral aspect.

AGLAI A QUERITOR R. F. Burn, sp. nov.

Small, about 20 mm. long and 4 mm. broad. Body-form cylindrical, dorsally divided into two unequal shields, anterior shield comprising about one third of total length; ends bluntly rounded. Foot broad, continued laterally into small, short and thick parapodia always close to the body and never undulating as in other species. Posterior shield continued rearwards into a thin funnel-like membrane enclosing the shell. Gill very small, of 4 or 5 bipinnate pinnæ on a single arm, in cavity formed by membrane covering free whorl of shell. Shell minute, wholly internal, of 1.5 whorls, the outerpart being free, very fragile, thick along inner edge and membranous toward outer margins. General body colour velvet, black flecked with light blue; anterior shield with a single blue edging on either side of the median line along the posterior edge; inner sides of parapodia pale grey, gill dull green, shell opaque white.

Habitat: Portarlington (TYPE), one specimen, Jan. 1957, R. F. Burn, Portarlington, two specimens, Aug.-Oct. 1954, R. F. Burn; Torquay, one specimen, Dec. 1954, R. F. Burn; Altona, one specimen, 1934, Mrs. Freame (in Australian Museum collection).

Station: Rare, only single specimens taken, crawling on sand and under stones (Portarlington); feeding on rotting seaweed in rock pool (Torquay).

Remarks. Some specimens are a dull yellow in general colour but these are always heavily maculated with black. When in motion, the posterior membrane is extended horizontally until it forms a cylindrical funnel, but when it is resting it is contracted. *A. taranga*, the other record of the genus from Victoria, is readily distinguished from this species. *A. taranga* has free parapodia which are wavy-edged, and the gill is large, passing completely across the body under the shell. The rear edge of the anterior shield is raised up like a protective guard, and the general body colour is striped with orange and white.

REFERENCES

- Allan, Joyce, 1933. *Rec. Aust. Mus.*, 18 (5).
—, 1950. *Aust. Shells*, 216-18.

JUNIOR AGE NATURE RECORD

Junior Age is making the summer period (ending on January 31) one for holiday recording. Record books are supplied to any group of three or more junior enthusiasts who will list survivals of original Victorian flora. So far, the work carried out and examined indicates that age has little influence on its quality, but age groups, as well as the opportunities provided by a given district, will be taken into account when prizes are awarded in February. There is a tendency to overestimate the amount of necessary botanical knowledge. However, members of the Club can greatly assist the enterprise of Junior Age by leading or helping a group.

—W. WADDELL.